

COUNTY COUNCIL
OF
HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

BILL NO. 01-40 (As Amended)

Introduced by Council President Hirsch at the request of the County Executive, Council Members
Chenowith and Miller, Council President Hirsch and Council Member Geppi

Legislative Day No. 01-37 Date December 11, 2001

AN EMERGENCY ACT to add the definitions of "agricultural seasonal" and "electronic message board" to Section 219-4, Definitions; to add new Subsection F(3) to Section 219-5, Sign types and restrictions; to repeal and reenact, with amendments, Section 219-7, Exemptions; to repeal and reenact, with amendments, Section 219-11, Illumination; to repeal and reenact, with amendments, and to add new Subsection F, Agricultural seasonal signs, to Section 219-12, Signs permitted in all zoning districts; to repeal and reenact, with amendments, Section 219-15, Billboards; all of Chapter 219, Signs, of the Harford County Code, as amended; to provide for a definition of agricultural seasonal signs and electronic message boards; to include agricultural seasonal signs as a temporary sign with setbacks and maximum sign area and height; to provide that signs on public transit stops and ballpark signs be exempt from certain provisions; to provide that agricultural seasonal signs shall be displayed less than 60 consecutive days; to increase the overall square footage for permanent institutional signs; to provide that electronic message boards are exempt from the provisions prohibiting illumination; to allow billboards in the General Industrial (GI) Districts only under certain conditions; to require the removal of billboards after abandonment; and generally relating to signs.

By the Council, December 11, 2001

Introduced, read first time, ordered posted and public hearing scheduled

on: January 8, 2002

at: 6:30 p.m.

By Order: James E. Massey, Jr. Council Administrator

PUBLIC HEARING

Having been posted and notice of time and place of hearing and title of Bill having been published according to the Charter, a public hearing was held on January 8, 2002, and concluded on January 8, 2002.

James E. Massey, Jr., Council Administrator

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW. [Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law. Underlining indicates language added to Bill by amendment. Language lined through indicates matter stricken out of Bill by amendment.

Section 1. Be It Enacted By The County Council of Harford County, Maryland that the definitions of “agricultural seasonal” and “electronic message board” be and they are hereby added to Section 219-4, Definitions; that Subsection F(3) be and it is hereby added to Section 219-5, Sign types and restrictions; that Section 219-7, Exemptions, be and it is hereby repealed and reenacted, with amendments; that Section 219-11, Illumination, be and it is hereby repealed and reenacted, with amendments; that Section 219-12, Signs permitted in all zoning districts, be and it is hereby repealed and reenacted, with amendments, and that Subsection F, Agricultural seasonal signs, be and it is hereby added to Section 219-12; and that Section 219-15, Billboards, be and it is hereby repealed and reenacted, with amendments, all of Chapter 219, Signs, of the Harford County Code, as amended, all to read as follows:

Chapter 219. Signs

§ 219-4. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

AGRICULTURAL SEASONAL – A SIGN WHICH ADVERTISES, ON A SEASONAL, TEMPORARY BASIS, AN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT AS DEFINED IN THE HARFORD COUNTY CODE, SECTION 267-4, DEFINITIONS.

ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARD – A SIGN WITH A FIXED OR CHANGING ~~DISPLAY/MESSAGE~~ DISPLAY, OR MESSAGE COMPOSED OF A SERIES OF LIGHTS THAT MAY BE CHANGED THROUGH ELECTRONIC MEANS. A TIME AND/OR TEMPERATURE SIGN SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED AN ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARD.

TENANT IDENTIFICATION SIGN – A FREESTANDING SIGN IDENTIFYING SPECIFIC TENANTS LOCATED ON SEPARATE LOTS WHICH SHARE COMMON ACCESS AND PARKING FACILITIES. THESE SIGNS ARE PERMITTED IN THE B1, B2, B3 AND CI ZONING DISTRICTS ONLY. THE STANDARDS CONTAINED IN SECTIONS 219-5B AND 219-13C(1)(G)(2) AND (3) FOR FREESTANDING SIGNS SHALL APPLY TO TENANT

IDENTIFICATION SIGNS. A TENANT IDENTIFICATION SIGN SHALL NOT BE
CONSIDERED A BILLBOARD.

§ 219-5. Sign types and restrictions.

F. Temporary signs.

(3) AGRICULTURAL SEASONAL SIGNS SHALL INCLUDE ANY
PORTABLE OR TEMPORARY SIGN WHICH ADVERTISES AN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT,
AS DEFINED IN SECTION 267-4 OF THE HARFORD COUNTY CODE, INTENDED TO BE
DISPLAYED ON A SEASONAL BASIS ONLY, NOT EXCEEDING 60 CONSECUTIVE DAYS.
THEY SHALL BE SET BACK NOT LESS THAN 10 FEET FROM THE PROPERTY LINE OR
ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY, SHALL HAVE A MAXIMUM SIGN AREA OF 32 SQUARE FEET,
AND A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 6 FEET.

§ 219-7. Exemptions.

The following types of signs are exempt from all the provisions of this chapter, except for
construction and safety regulations and the following standards:

A. Public signs: public signs erected by or on the order of a public official in the
performance of duty, such as but not limited to directional signs, regulatory signs, warning signs,
informational signs and legal notices.

B. Special event signs: temporary signs announcing any public, charitable, educational or
religious event or function, located on the premises where the event or function is to take place. They
shall be set back not less than [ten (10)] feet from the property line and shall have a maximum sign
area of [thirty-two (32)] square feet and shall not exceed a height of [six (6)] feet. Such signs shall
not be erected more than [thirty (30)] days prior to the event or function and must be removed within
[seven (7)] days after the event or function. Such signs shall not be illuminated. If building-

mounted, these signs shall be flat wall signs and shall not project above the roofline.

C. Integral signs: integral signs designating names of buildings, dates of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets and plaques when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum or other permanent-type construction and made an integral part of the structure, as well as signs forming an integral part of or attached to pumps dispersing fuels, vending machines and service appliances.

D. Private traffic control: signs directing traffic movement onto a premises or within a premises, not exceeding [four (]4[)] square feet in area for each sign. Illumination of these signs shall conform to § 219-11 hereof.

E. Real estate signs: real estate signs not exceeding [six (]6[)] square feet in area and located on the subject property tract. They shall be removed within [fourteen (]14[)] days after execution of a lease or contract for sale of the property.

F. Project development sign: temporary signs for undeveloped parcels offering the sale, rental or lease of the property to be set back at least [ten (]10[)] feet from the road right-of-way and not to exceed [ten (]10[)] feet in height above the road grade. One [(1)] sign shall be permitted for each road frontage of at least [fifty (]50[)] feet. The maximum sign area shall not exceed:

(1) Twenty-four [(24)] square feet for property with less than [two hundred fifty (]250[)] feet of road frontage.

(2) Forty-eight [(48)] square feet for property with more than [two hundred fifty (]250[)] feet but less than [five hundred (]500[)] feet of road frontage.

(3) Sixty-four [(64)] square feet for property with [five hundred (]500[)] feet or more of road frontage.

G. Political campaign and public issue signs: except for billboards, signs announcing

1 candidates seeking public office and advocating the support or defeat of public issues shall be
2 permitted, provided that the total area of the signs does not exceed [sixteen (]16[)] square feet for each
3 premises in a residential district and [thirty-two (]32[)] square feet in an agricultural, business or
4 industrial district. These signs shall be confined to private property. No sign shall be placed within
5 [sixty (]60[)] feet of the center of a road intersection or in such a manner as to impede vision. These
6 signs may be displayed [forty-five (]45[)] days prior to the primary election and shall be removed
7 [fifteen (]15[)] days after the general election or within [fifteen (]15[)] days after the primary if the
8 candidate is not a candidate for the general election.

9 H. Homeowner identification signs: these signs identifying the name, address and
10 occupation of residents shall not exceed [two (]2[)] square feet.

11 I. Agricultural identification signs: agricultural identification signs not to exceed [thirty-
12 two (]32[)] square feet in area and not to be located less than [thirty-five (]35[)] feet from the center
13 line of the road or [ten (]10[)] feet from the road right-of-way, whichever is greater.

14 J. Directional signs: directional signs for any public, charitable, educational or religious
15 function to be set back [ten (]10[)] feet from road right-of-way. These signs shall not exceed [two
16 (]2[)] square feet in sign area and shall not exceed [four (]4[)] feet in height above the road grade.

17 K. Permanent residential entrance or development project identification signs. Residential
18 entrance or development project identification sign with letters or advertising area not to exceed a total
19 area of [thirty-two (]32[)] square feet shall be permitted on the property, provided that it is located not
20 less than [ten (]10[)] feet from the road right-of-way line. In addition, the height of the sign or
21 structure shall not exceed [six (]6[)] feet. If the parcel or lot has a multiple frontage of at least [fifty
22 (]50[)] feet, additional signs with letters or advertising area not to exceed a total of [thirty-two (]32[)]
23 square feet shall be permitted. Such sign or structure shall not exceed [six (]6[)] feet in height and shall

not be located less than [ten (10)] feet from the road right-of-way. Said signs may be split entrance signs; however, the overall advertising area may not exceed the [thirty-two (32)] square feet.

L. Noncommercial flags: on-site flags of a nation, state, political subdivision, educational institution, or noncommercial organization, provided that each flag displayed by a business use or industrial use is displayed on a flagpole that is not more than 30 feet in height above the ground. In this subsection, "business use" and "industrial use" have the meaning stated in Section 267-4 of this Code.

M. Commercial flags: on-site flags displaying a corporate insignia or name of a business, commercial, or industrial activity, provided that:

(1) The number of flags displayed is limited to 3 flags for each side of the lot with frontage on a public road;

(2) Each flag is placed at a distance that is at least one-third of the required setback from any road right-of-way or any lot line;

(3) The surface area of each flag does not exceed 15 square feet;

(4) One flag may be displayed on a flagpole that is not more than 30 feet in height above the ground;

(5) Any additional flag is displayed on a flagpole that is not more than 12 feet in height above the ground; and

(6) The flags are displayed in a manner that does not:

(a) Obstruct access to the lot; or

(b) Constitute a traffic hazard.

N. PUBLIC TRANSIT STOP SHELTERS: SIGNS INTEGRATED INTO THE STRUCTURE OF A PUBLIC TRANSIT STOP SHELTER INSTALLED BY A GOVERNMENT

1 ENTITY OR AT THE DIRECTION OF AN ENTITY HAVING A CONTRACTUAL
2 RELATIONSHIP TO A GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ERECTING OR
3 MAINTAINING PUBLIC TRANSIT STOP SHELTERS.

4 O. BALLPARK SIGNS: SIGNS INSTALLED ON PUBLIC PROPERTY WITH THE
5 PERMISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION AT BALL FIELDS
6 OWNED OR OPERATED BY THE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION.
7 SAID SIGNS SHALL NOT EXCEED 6 SQUARE FEET IN SIZE AND SHALL BE ERECTED FOR
8 NO LONGER THAN 4 MONTHS.

9 **§ 219-11. Illumination.**

10 A. The light from any illuminated sign or from any light source, including the interior of a
11 building, shall be so shaded, shielded or directed that the light intensity or brightness shall not
12 adversely affect surrounding or facing premises nor adversely affect the vision of motor vehicle
13 operators.

14 B. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARDS, AS DEFINED
15 IN SECTION 219-4, no sign shall have blinking or flashing lights or other illumination devices which
16 have a changing light intensity, brightness or color or which are so constructed and operated so as to
17 create an appearance or illusion of writing, except signs designed to show the time, temperature and
18 other public service messages. Nothing contained in this chapter shall, however, be construed as
19 preventing the use of lights or decorations commemorating religious and patriotic holidays. Beacon
20 lights or search lights shall be temporarily permitted for advertising special events.

21 C. No exposed reflective-type bulbs and no strobe lights or incandescent lamps exceeding
22 [fifteen (15)] watts shall be used on the exterior surface of any sign so as to expose the face of the
23 bulb, light or lamp to public street or adjacent property, except signs designed to show the time,

temperature and other public service messages.

§ 219-12. Signs permitted in all zoning districts.

The following signs shall be permitted anywhere within the county:

A. Construction signs. One [(1)] sign shall be permitted for all construction contractors, one [(1)] for all professionals and firms and one [(1)] for all lending institutions on sites under construction. Each sign shall not exceed [thirty-two (32)] square feet, and no more than three [(3)] such signs shall be permitted on one [(1)] site. The sign shall be confined to the construction site, construction shed or trailer and shall be removed within [fifteen (15)] days after the beginning of the intended use of the project.

B. (Reserved)

C. Street banners. Temporary street banners advertising a public event shall be permitted if a permit is used and approval has been granted by the appropriate public utility and/or the appropriate state or county highway authority.

D. Permanent institutional signs. Signs of a permanent nature setting forth the name of places of worship, service clubs, civic organizations, public or service centers, public institutions, schools or other similar uses shall be permitted if the setback is [one-third (1/3)] of the required building setback of the district. Illumination shall be in accordance with the restrictions set forth in §219-11. Such signs shall not exceed [thirty-two (32)] 54 square feet for the overall structure and shall not exceed [six (6)] feet in overall height.

E. Agricultural road-stand signs. Signs for accessory agricultural roadside stands shall not exceed [thirty (32)] square feet and not exceed a height of [six (6)] feet. Such signs shall not be located less than [thirty-five (35)] feet from the center line of the road or [ten (10)] feet from the public road right-of-way, whichever is greater.

F. AGRICULTURAL SEASONAL SIGNS. SIGNS TO ADVERTISE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AS DEFINED IN SECTION 267-4 OF THE HARFORD COUNTY CODE, TO BE DISPLAYED ON A SEASONAL BASIS ONLY, NOT TO EXCEED 60 CONSECUTIVE DAYS. THESE SIGNS MUST BE SET BACK NOT LESS THAN 10 FEET FROM THE PROPERTY LINE OR ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY, SHALL HAVE A MAXIMUM SIGN AREA OF 32 SQUARE FEET, AND A MAXIMUM HEIGHT OF 6 FEET.

§ 219-15. Billboards.

A. General. Billboards shall be permitted in the [General Business (B3), Commercial Industrial (CI) and] General Industrial (GI) District[s] only. New billboards may not be constructed within the Rte. 40 CRD.

B. Location. Billboards shall not be permitted to be erected within [300] 750 feet of any RESIDENCE, HISTORIC STRUCTURE OR BUILDING AS DEFINED IN § 267-4 OF THIS CODE, public square or the entrance to any public park, public, private or parochial school, library, church or similar institution. All such signs shall be set back from the front property line the distance required for a principal building in the zoning district in which located. No billboard shall be permitted to be erected within 100 feet of a road intersection unless the base of the sign is not less than 10 feet above ground level or road surface, whichever is higher. No billboard shall be erected within 660 feet of any highway which is part of the interstate highway system.

C. Height. A billboard shall be no more than 40 feet in height from road grade. A variance in maximum height may be granted by the Board due to the uniqueness of the property.

D. Area. Billboards displaying poster panels may be single- or double-faced. No structure shall contain more than two faces showing in the same direction. The two billboards shall not exceed a combined total of 600 square feet. Painted bulletins shall be limited to an individual face, either single-

1 or double-faced, and shall not exceed a total of 900 square feet per face.

2 E. Illumination. Illumination shall be in accordance with the provisions of § 219-11.

3 F. Removal of billboards in the Rte. 40 CRD. Existing billboards located on sites within
4 the Rte. 40 CRD may remain and may be replaced subject to approval of necessary permits. Should
5 the billboard be located on a site with an existing use, expansion of the use by more than 20% shall
6 require the removal of said billboard. Should a billboard be located as the sole use on a site as of the
7 effective date of the legislation, future development of the site for other permitted uses shall require the
8 removal of said billboard.

9 G. IN THE EVENT THAT A BILLBOARD CEASES TO BE USED FOR ~~DISPLAY~~
10 ADVERTISING OR FALLS INTO DISREPAIR FOR A PERIOD OF ~~6~~ 3 MONTHS, THE
11 BILLBOARD WILL BE DEEMED ABANDONED. SOLICITATION FOR ADVERTISING TO
12 BE DISPLAYED ON A BILLBOARD DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ADVERTISING. ONCE A
13 BILLBOARD HAS BEEN ABANDONED, THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR SHALL NOTIFY
14 THE OWNER OF THE PROPERTY AND THE OWNER OF THE BILLBOARD THAT THE
15 BILLBOARD HAS BEEN ABANDONED AND MUST BE REMOVED. THE OWNERS SHALL
16 BE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO DISMANTLE THE
17 BILLBOARD AND REMOVE AND DISPOSE OF ALL VISIBLE REMNANTS AND
18 MATERIALS FROM THE SUBJECT PARCEL 90 DAYS AFTER NOTIFICATION BY THE
19 ZONING ADMINISTRATOR THAT THE BILLBOARD HAS BEEN ABANDONED.

20 Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted that this Act is hereby declared to be an emergency act
21 necessary to prevent the proliferation of large, immobile permanent structures that may inhibit traffic
22 safety and detract from the appearance of the County and to facilitate a partnership with the State in the
23 construction of transit shelters and this Act shall take effect on the date it becomes law.

EFFECTIVE: January 15, 2002

*The Council Administrator does hereby certify that
fifteen (15) copies of this Bill are immediately available for
distribution to the public and the press.*

Council Administrator

**BILL NO. 01-40
AS AMENDED**

HARFORD COUNTY BILL NO. 01-40 (As Amended)
Brief Title) Sign Code Amendment

is herewith submitted to the County Council of Harford County for enrollment as being the text as finally passed.

CERTIFIED TRUE AND CORRECT

ENROLLED

James E. Massey, Jr.
Administrator

[Signature]

Date 1-8-02

Date 1/8/02

BY THE COUNCIL

Read the third time.

Passed: LSD 02-2 (January 8, 2002)

Failed of Passage: _____

By Order

James E. Massey, Jr.
Council Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 10th day of January, 2001, at 3:00 p.m.



James E. Massey, Jr.
Council Administrator

BY THE EXECUTIVE

[Signature]
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

APPROVED:

Date 1-15-02

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill (No. 01-40, as amended), having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, becomes law on January 15, 2002.

James E. Massey, Jr.
Council Administrator

Effective Date: January 15, 2002

**BILL NO. 01-40
AS AMENDED**